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Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names
New York, 21-30 August 2007
Agenda item 20
Adoption of the report of the Conference

Draft report

Organization of work of the Conference

A. Terms of reference

The ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 21 to 30 August 2007, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2003/294.

B. Opening of the Conference

The Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs opened the Conference and made a statement.

C. Attendance

[To be completed]

D. Election of the President

At the 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August, the Conference elected, as President of the Conference, by acclamation, Helen Kerfoot (Canada), who gave a welcoming address.

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E. Organizational matters

(i) Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

Also at the 1st plenary meeting, the Conference adopted the provisional rules of procedure (E/CONF.98/135).

(ii) Adoption of the agenda

At the same meeting, the Conference adopted the provisional agenda (E/CONF.98/1). The agenda as adopted was as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Organizational matters:
   (a) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
   (b) Adoption of the agenda;
   (c) Election of officers other than the President;
   (d) Organization of work;
   (e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference.
4. Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference.
5. Reports by divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the situation in their divisions and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference.
6. Meetings and conferences:
   (a) United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names;
   (b) Divisional and interdivisional meetings and programmes;
   (c) National names meetings, conferences and symposiums;
   (d) International names meetings, conferences and symposiums.
7. Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names.
8. Economic and social benefits of the national and international standardization of geographical names.
9. National standardization:
   (a) Field collection of names;
   (b) Office treatment of names;
   (c) Treatment of names in multilingual areas;
   (d) Administrative structure of national names authorities;

(e) Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.

10. Exonyms.

11. Reports on programmes to assist with pronunciation of names.

12. Toponymic data files:

(a) Data collection procedures;

(b) Data elements required;

(c) Toponymic data transfer standards and formats;

(d) Automated data-processing systems;

(e) Compatibility and structure of systems;

(f) National gazetteers;

(g) Other publications.

13. Toponymic websites.

14. Terminology in the standardization of geographical names.

15. Features beyond a single sovereignty:

(a) Policies, procedures and cooperative arrangements;

(b) Features common to two or more nations.

16. Writing systems:

(a) Romanization;

(b) Conversion into non-Roman writing systems;

(c) Writing of names in unwritten languages.

17. Toponymic education and practice and international cooperation:

(a) Existing education and practice;

(b) Training courses in toponymy;

(c) Exchange of advice and information;

(d) Exchange of personnel;

(e) Technical assistance;

(f) Cooperation with national organizations;

(g) Cooperation with international organizations;

(h) Cooperation with public information media.

18. Country names.

19. Arrangements for the Tenth Conference.

20. Adoption of the report of the Conference.

21. Adoption of resolutions drafted during the Conference.

22. Closing of the Conference.

At the same meeting, the Conference had before it the annotations to the agenda (E/CONF.98/INF/2, in English only).

(iii) Election of officers other than the President

At the 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August, the conference elected the following officers:

Vice-Presidents:
Brian Goodchild (Australia)
Luís Abrahamo (Mozambique)

Rapporteur:
Caroline Burgess (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Editor-in-Chief:
Paul Woodman (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), assisted by Brahim Atoui (Algeria), Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig (Ireland), Vladimir Boginski (Russian Federation) and Susana Rodríguez-Ramos (Mexico)

(iv) Organization of work

Also at the 1st meeting, the Conference approved its organization of work (E/CONF.98/INF/3, in English only) and established four technical committees. The Conference also elected the officers and allocated agenda items to the technical committees as follows:

Committee I

Chairman:
David Munro (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Vice-Chairman:
Rudolf Matindas (Indonesia)

Rapporteur:
William Watt (Australia), assisted by Isolde Hausner (Austria)

National standardization (item 9 and sub-items (a)-(e))

Committee II

Chairman:
Joern Sievers (Germany)

Vice-Chairman:
Saif Al Qaydi (United Arab Emirates)

Rapporteur:
Trent Palmer (United States of America), assisted by Wendy Shaw (New Zealand)

Toponymic data files (item 12 and sub-items (a)-(g))

Toponymic websites (item 13)

Committee III

Chairman:
Leo Dillon (United States of America)

Vice-Chairman:
Peter Jordan (Austria)

Rapporteur:
Peter Vichnicki (United States of America), assisted by Peeter Päll (Estonia)

Exonyms (item 10)

Reports on programmes to assist with pronunciation of names (item 11)

Writing systems (item 16 and sub-items (a)-(c))

Country names (item 18)

Committee IV

Chairman:
Ferjan Ormeling (Netherlands)

Vice-Chairman:
Botolv Helleland (Norway)

Rapporteur:
Catherine Cheetham (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), assisted by Truman Kubheka (South Africa)

Terminology in the standardization of geographical names (item 14)

Features beyond a single sovereignty (item 15 and sub-items (a)-(b))

Toponymic education and practice and international cooperation (item 17 and sub-items (a)-(h))

Items 1 to 8 and 19 to 21 were considered in plenary meetings.

(v) Credentials of representatives to the Conference

The Credentials Committee, composed of the President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Rapporteur and a representative of the Statistics Division reported that the credentials of all representatives had been found to be in order.